



Artwork Guidelines

Please contact a customer service representative at **800-886-0634** if you have any questions.

Our art guidelines are standard for the digital print industry. Large format digital printing differs from that of offset printing. It is important that your graphic designer follows our guidelines to ensure quality printing without order delays.

Preferred File Formats

- **Adobe Illustrator** - All versions. **Convert text to outlines and include all linked images.**
- **Photoshop** - All versions. Include all layers, paths, channels, linked images and fonts.

Not Recommended File Formats

- **InDesign** - Include all layers, paths, channels, linked images and fonts. Convert text to outlines. Do not embed images. Save as a press quality PDF file. Check the PDF file for errors.
- **Quark Express** - Use the "save page as" an EPS feature under the "file" menu. Open the EPS in Illustrator and convert text to outlines. Include all linked images. Do not embed images.
- **CorelDraw** - Include all layers, paths, channels, linked images and fonts. Convert text to outlines. Do not embed images. Export as an EPS file.
- **PDF** - We do not print directly from PDF documents. They must be opened in Illustrator and checked. When PDF files are created fonts and images are embedded automatically. When PDF files are opened by outside programs all embedding is lost. You must outline all fonts prior to creating your PDF.

Not Accepted File Formats

- **Microsoft Word**
- **Microsoft Publisher**
- **PowerPoint**

Artwork Templates

Please take advantage of our artwork templates. Graphic templates will be sent to you. Our templates are to scale. We recommend opening templates in Illustrator and layering your artwork within the template. Artwork Guidelines Please contact a customer service representative at **800-886-0634** if you have any questions.

Proofs

- **E-Proofs** – All orders receive a digital e-proof prior to order production. E-Proofs are designed to verify graphic placement and grammar only. E-Proofs cannot be used to judge resolution or color output.
- **Hard Proofs** – A hard proof is a printed sample using the same printer and material as the final product. Hard proofs are generally a mini print along with a full-size cropped section of part of the art file. Although ordering hard proofs adds to the cost and production time, it is the **ONLY** way to ensure that color output will be acceptable. *Clients who waive hard proofs for any reason also waive their right to reprints.*

Resolution

Due to the large size of our prints it is important to create artwork with reasonable file sizes. Please keep files sizes under 1 gigabyte. We suggest using a vector-based program like Illustrator to create the bulk of your design. To keep files size low make sure photos are no more than **125 dpi at final size**. By working with files that are at print size you can verify what the output will look like by viewing the file at 100%. While we may inform you of pixelated images during the proofing process it is not our obligation to do so. It is your responsibility to supply print ready artwork.

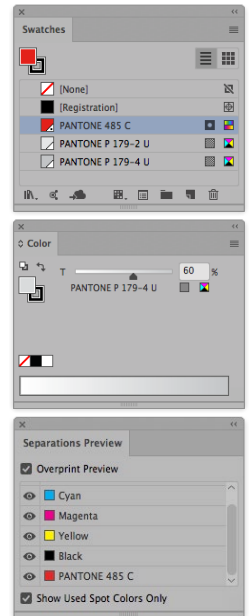
Color Output

We print in CMYK. Files submitted in RGB will be converted to CMYK prior to printing. Color output on all digital printers depends on the individual printer and the material that it is printing on. Colors displayed on monitors may not be an accurate representation of final printer output. For this reason, we strongly suggest ordering hard proofs if color output is critical.

Color Matching

We can only color match vector-based files. We cannot color match Photoshop or flattened image files. Not all colors can be precisely duplicated due to differences in printers, ink and media. We strongly recommend ordering printed hard proofs to review color output. Specify colors that must be color matched in PMS solid coated. While we will do our best to match your PMS colors, we cannot guarantee exact matches.

- **Work in CMYK** (U.S. Web Coated SWOP v2). Converting RGB Gray values into CMYK often leaves Black at 0% which will give all grays an undesirable warm (magenta) or cool (cyan) hue.
- **Use PMS Pantone swatches** to name any colors that need to be matched. And assign those colors to the artwork in the file.
- **Use Tints of a color instead of changing the opacity** when possible. Opacity makes the object transparent and any color below or above that object will alter the color unless that is the desired effect.
- **Separations preview panel in Illustrator.** Use to check that spot colors are assigned correctly, and transparencies behave accordingly by clicking "Overprint Preview" on and each color on and off (eye symbol).



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Color Matching Previous Prints

We do not color match previously printed items. This is due to color output from digital printers' changes over time. We suggest PMS color matching as an option but there is no way to guarantee colors will match previously printed materials.

Flattened Files

We can print flattened files. If color output is not an issue it is a good way to ensure graphic effects print correctly. When we print from flattened files there is no guarantee of color output. We suggest ordering hard proofs to make sure color output is acceptable.

Tips for Graphic Artists

- To keep file size manageable, we suggest using as much vector-based output as possible. Vector based programs also allow us to make color corrections to ensure color accuracy. You can supply vector files in .eps or Illustrator.
- We further suggest using Photoshop when working with image files. Image files should be inserted into your vector file by using the "place" function. When supplying your vector files, please remember to also supply us with the original "placed" image files.
- Specify critical PMS colors in the vector file using the PMS solid coated color chart. Files that cannot be manipulated cannot be color matched.
- Transparencies viewed on monitors will differ from printed output. We therefore suggest ordering hard proofs when using transparencies. PMS color matching of transparencies is not technically possible.
- Please use our artwork templates to ensure art is correctly sized and contains the proper bleeds.
- If your file is over 1 gigabyte, simplify your design by using more vector-based imagery.

Most Common File Issues

- Fonts not being outlined
- Linked files not being supplied along with art files
- Fonts not being outlined in linked files
- Designers not using our templates
- Use of low-resolution images

Please contact our Creative Director for questions:

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